

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for generating or extending a user interest profile, comprising:
 - monitoring e-mail messages directed to the user;
 - selecting those e-mail messages satisfying at least one condition from ~~the a~~ conditional group of ~~the a~~ message having an attachment, ~~the a~~ message being a forwarded message and ~~the a~~ message including a URL as indicators that individual ones of the e-mail messages are likely to include information relevant to the user's interests; and
 - extracting profile data from the selected messages;
 - wherein, for each selected message, the selected message is selected and the extracted profile data is extracted before the user reads the selected message.
2. (Original) A method according to claim 1, further comprising storing the extracted profile data.
3. (Original) A method according to claim 2, further comprising displaying the extracted profile data to the user and storing only those data indicated by the user.
- 4-5. (Canceled)
6. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein said extracting further comprises operating on words added by a forwarder of the forwarded message.
7. (Canceled)
8. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the profile data comprise one or more keywords or phrases.
9. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein said extracting further comprises operating on data contained within a subject line of the message.

10. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein said extracting further comprises operating on an attachment to the message.

11. (Original) A method according to claim 1, further comprising using the extracted data to search an information repository for matching items.

12. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for generating or extending a user interest profile, the method comprising:

means for monitoring e-mail messages directed to the user;

means for selecting those e-mail messages satisfying at least one condition from ~~the~~a conditional group of ~~the~~a message having an attachment, ~~the~~a message being a forwarded message and ~~the~~a message including a URL as indicators that individual ones of the e-mail messages are likely to include information relevant to the user's interests; and

means for extracting profile data from the selected messages;

wherein, for each selected message, the means for selecting selects the selected message and the means for extracting extracts the extracted profile data before the user reads the selected message.

13-14. (Canceled)

15. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said extracting means operates on words added by a forwarder of the forwarded message.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the profile data comprise one or more keywords or phrases.

18. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said extracting means operates on one of data contained within a subject line of the message and an attachment to the message.

19. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 12, further comprising:

a display for displaying the extracted profile data to the user; and

a memory for storing only those data indicated by the user.

20. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 12, further comprising means for using the extracted data to search an information repository for matching items.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the e-mail messages are incoming e-mail messages.

22. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the e-mail messages are incoming e-mail messages.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising using the extracted profile data to create or modify the user profile.

24. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 12, further comprising means for using the extracted profile data to create or modify the user profile.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
searching a data repository using the extracted profile data; and
displaying the results of the search when the user reads the selected message.

26. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 12, further comprising:
means for searching a data repository using the extracted profile data; and
means for displaying the results of the search when the user reads the selected message.